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(*d*) whether the Government have any information that the tax is still being collected in respect of trees which have ceased to exist?

THE HON. SRI KALA VENKATA RAO :—" (*a*) Yes.

" (*b*) The trees are the tamarind, mango, jack, illupai, ralmyra, coconut and date.

" (*c*) A statement [a] containing the information is placed on the table of the House.

" (*d*) The Government have no information."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" May I enquire how is it that this tree tax which was nothing at all in 1943–44 in Tinnevelly district jumped up to thirty thousand and odd rupees in the next year? "

THE HON. SRI KALA VENKATA RAO :—" Perhaps many evasions have been found out."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" May I inquire whether this tree tax does not form part of the permanent settlement and as such is collected as part of the land revenue? "

THE HON. SRI KALA VENKATA RAO :—" The permanent settlement does not apply to Tinnevelly district, it is only ryotwari settlement that applies."

Abolition of the Revenue Board.

* 124 *Q.*—SRI S. B. ADITYAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Land Revenue be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Government propose to abolish the Revenue Board;

(*b*) whether a report in this connexion was submitted by the Board;

(*c*) if so, whether the Government will place the report on the table of the House;

(*d*) what the main functions of the Board are; and

(*e*) what other department or officer would exercise the functions of the Board, in the event of the abolition of the Board?

THE HON. SRI KALA VENKATA RAO :—" (*a*) & (*e*) The matter is under the consideration of the Government.

" (*b*) Yes.

" (*c*) As the report is a confidential one, Government do not propose to place it on the table of the House.

" (*d*) A list [b] of the main functions of the Board is placed on the table of the House."

Affairs relating to the Fisheries Department at Ennore.

* 125 *Q.*—SRI C. N. MUTHURANGA MUDALIYAR : Will the Hon. the Minister for Rural Development be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that the Government have sanctioned some lorries for the transport of fish baskets from Ennore and other intermediate stations to Madras;

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[a] Printed as Appendix III on pages 649–650 infra.

[b] Printed as Appendix IV on page 650 infra.

(b) whether the fishermen and their womenfolk who carry fish baskets in the lorries are being abused by Mr. Giriappa, Superintendent of the Fisheries Department;

(c) if so, what action the Government propose to take in the matter;

(d) whether it is a fact that very often the Superintendent of the Fisheries Department diverts some of the lorries to Arambakkam and thus causes inconvenience and loss to the fishermen in the locality;

(e) whether it is a fact that there are no facilities for weighing the fish baskets brought into the lorry in the intermediate stations and that the assessment is made arbitrarily;

(f) whether it is a fact that often the assessment is not brought into accounts;

(g) whether it is a fact that Mr. Giriappa has been Superintendent of the Fisheries Department in that locality for more than five years; and

(h) whether there is any proposal before the Government to appoint a new Superintendent?

THE HON. SRI V. KURMAYYA :—" (a) The answer is in the affirmative.

" (b) The allegation is not true.

" (c) Does not arise.

" (d) In the beginning when it was found that three vans out of the four were sufficient for the needs of bringing fish from Ennore, the fourth was put into service between Arambakkam and Madras. This has since been discontinued as the van is in need of repairs and laid up in a workshop.

" (e) The transport of fish from intermediate stations is rare. There are no facilities for carrying weighing machineries in the vans nor is it practicable to have them at the intermediate stations en route. Whenever way-side consignments are taken in their approximate weights are assessed and dealt with accordingly.

" (f) This is not correct.

" (g) The post of Superintendent of Ennore fisheries station was created only a little more than a year ago by the conversion of the post of Laboratory Assistant held by Mr. Giriappa, who has put in more than five years service at Ennore.

" (h) The answer is in the negative."

* SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" Mr. President, on this last question I wish to raise a point of order and ask you to give a ruling. Sir, this question relates to an alleged misconduct of a certain official and the point of order I wish to raise is whether questions imputing misconduct to individual officials are admissible in this House. I wish to point out that a similar point of order was raised in the Assembly a few days ago and a ruling was given that questions which merely allege misconduct of particular officials

should not be asked without first taking the matter to the notice of the Minister concerned. I believe the Leader of the other House who is also the Home Minister gave the undertaking that he will be prepared to listen and deal with allegations which may be brought forward against particular officials. We have also the rule 28 (7) of the Council Rules, which says that questions should not relate to private or parochial interest. Apart from this question, whether it is private or not, I submit it is desirable to have uniform rules of procedure for the Assembly and the Council and I submit it would be in the best interests if mere personal allegations are not made on the floor of the House by way of questions or supplementary questions before they are brought to the notice of Ministers. I submit a ruling given will help to keep the proceedings at a high and healthy level."

* SRI B. NARAYANASWAMI NAYUDU :—"The subject of this question is that some womenfolk, fisherwomen, were abused by an officer of the Government. Has this House no right to ask whether that is just and proper? That is the only point here."

SRI C. N. MUTHURANGA MUDALIYAR :—"Sir, it is not a personal attack or a parochial matter. It is a matter affecting the whole community of fisherwomen who are involved in this question."

MR. PRESIDENT :—"I allowed this question, but I am not giving it as an answer to this point of order. I am only mentioning it for the reason that I thought that it was not objectionable. Regarding the point of order raised, I would like to make the position clear. I do not think there can be a general rule to the effect that no question of any sort imputing any kind of conduct or misconduct to a public servant should be raised here. I do not think there can be such a general prohibition. So far as this question is concerned, I agree with Mr. Narayanaswami Nayudu that a question asking for information whether or not an official abused some people who had to go to him in the discharge of his duties is one for Government to know and is also of public interest. So I allowed this question. But at the same time I would like hon. Members before they put questions of this nature to take the question to the Minister concerned, and if the hon. Member does not get an answer or is not satisfied with the answer, or thinks the public should know, then it may be desirable to bring it before the House. But without taking such a direct step I do not think it would be desirable to bring it here. This is not a ruling; but that is what I feel in the matter."

* SRI C. N. MUTHURANGA MUDALIYAR :—"I submit on a point of information, Sir, that this question was not put off-hand. I received a communication from the leaders of the community concerned and they have also sent their communication to the Hon. Minister primarily. Only a copy of it was sent to me and I endorsed it and sent it to the Minister concerned. It was only after that that I tabled this question for answer because I did not receive any reply to my communication." 11-30 a.m.